Fulbright, Symington Hit Kissinger Powers

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Sens. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.) and J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) expressed concern yesterday that new powers given to Henry A. Kissinger over U.S. intelligence operations might be used to deny information to Congress.

In part this is the latest version of a running controversy over wnat some senators see as the ever-growing power of the President's influential national security adviser, who is beyond the reach of Congress.

But it also represents suspicion that the White House may be creating new barriers for which could restrict Congress access to diering intelligence evaluations.

Symington, on the Senate floor, called for hearings to examine the purpose and consequences of the Nixon administration's reorganization of the control structure for the national intelligence systems, announced last Friday. He protested that there was no advance consultation, and that "the Executive Branch does not consider either the organization, or the operation, of the intelligence community to be matters of concern to the Congress."

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Congressional access to information about U.S. intelligence activities is "already severly restricted far more than other aspect of the federal budget," Symington protested.

It may be that the reorganization "is a constructive move" to eliminate duplication and waste, said Symington, and that should be examined. However, he said, the new plan will lead to "the creation of a new and obviously more powerful supervisory committee chaired by the adviser to the president for national security affairs (Kissinger) . . ."

This arrangement, Symington said, can bring the most important aspects of intelligence production and coordination "directly under the White House" and "thus within the scope of what the President believes he can deny to the Congress through the exercise of executive privilege."

Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, told newsmen that Kissinger's new authority represents "a further erosion of congressional control over the intelligence community." Fulbright earlier this year introduced what was dubbed "the Kissinger bill," to set up new rules to limit the exercise of executive privilege, which the President can invoke to keep Congress from questioning Kissinger and other White House advisers.

Symington said that last Saturday he wrote Sen. John C. Stennis (D-Miss.), chairman of the Armed Services Committee, urging hearings on the intelligence shift be held before either that committee or its Subcommittee on the Central Intelligence Agency.

As a senior member of both groups, Symington disclosed yesterday that despite claims that there is constant congressional supervision of the CIA, the Senate CIA Subcommittee "has not met once this year."

Symington is the only congressman who is a member of both the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services committees.